



## Kerry Agribusiness End of Year Message – December 2024

As we approach the end of 2024, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all our milk suppliers for your dedication and resilience throughout what has been a year of contrasts in Irish dairy farming.

The year started with a very poor Spring and a challenging early Summer, marked by difficult weather conditions, reduced grass growth, and constrained milk supplies. The latter half of the year has however brought a remarkable turnaround. Over the past three months, improved weather conditions have supported excellent grass growth and extended grazing which has resulted in a surge in milk supply, with weekly volumes even surpassing the highs of 2021. As it stands, milk volumes in 2024 will come in just slightly down on 2023, having been double digit percentages behind 2023 across peak.

This upturn in milk supply has been accompanied by a welcome strengthening of milk pricing, predominantly driven by strong butter pricing. Encouragingly, these stronger prices are expected to hold into the Spring of 2025. On the inputs side, while inflationary pressures that commenced in 2021 and peaked in 2022 have seen significant deflation through 2023 and into this year, input costs remain elevated relative to pre-2021 levels. Further gradual reductions in input pricing

are anticipated, though we expect that prices may not return to 2020 levels given the structural supply-chain cost increases that have occurred.

I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the outstanding achievements of some of our milk suppliers this year. Congratulations to Ian, John, and Mary Fox, winners of the Kerry Agribusiness Milk Quality and Sustainability Awards for 2024. Their exceptional farm in Bulgaden, Kilmallock is a benchmark for excellence, and we look forward to hosting a farm walk there in 2025.

Additionally, congratulations to Sinead and Eoghan McCarthy of Callinafercy, Milltown, on winning the Environmental Stewardship Award at the 2024 NDC & Kerrygold Quality Milk Awards. Their leadership in sustainable farming is an example to the wider dairy community.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge Thomas, Joe, Philomena, and Siobhan Stack from Banna, Co. Kerry, who were named the Kerry Agribusiness CellCheck Champions at the recent Animal Health Ireland Annual CellCheck Awards. Their commitment to animal health and milk quality is exemplary.

On behalf of the entire Kerry Agribusiness team, I want to express my deep appreciation for your partnership, business, and commitment over the past year. I wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

*James O'Connell*  
General Manager.

## CellCheck Awards

Congratulations to Thomas, Joe, Philomena, and Siobhan Stack from Banna, Co. Kerry, who have been named the Kerry Agribusiness CellCheck Champions at the recent Animal Health Ireland Annual CellCheck Awards. These awards recognise the outstanding achievements of Irish dairy farmers in maintaining herd health, particularly those who consistently achieve low somatic cell counts (SCC) in their dairy herds.

The Stack family, who milk 92 cows, attribute their success in maintaining low SCC to several key practices on their farm:

- **Milk recording** is considered an essential tool for managing cell count.

- **Daily stripping** of cows is performed.
- **Selective Dry Cow Therapy** is employed, with cows having SCC < 50,000 cells receiving only sealer at drying off.
- **Hygiene in the cubicle shed** is meticulously maintained during the dry period.



Thomas and Siobhan Stack pictured at the Annual CellCheck Awards

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## GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START



**FRI**  
**10 JAN**  
**JOHN LAWLOR**  
**Ballysheen,**  
**Abbeydorney,**  
**Co. Kerry**  
**V92 A260**

- ✓ **PREVENTING PNEUMONIA IN CALVES**
- ✓ **UNDERSTANDING DAIRY AND BEEF INDICES TO PRODUCE QUALITY CALVES**
- ✓ **WAYS TO UTILISE PAIN RELIEF DURING THE CALVING SEASON**
- ✓ **ACHIEVING OPTIMAL RUMEN DEVELOPMENT**

## FARM&HOME STORE

### *Christmas Draw*

**€10,000 in Prizes**

Spend €50 in your local Kerry Agribusiness Store and enter our Christmas Draw.

Guaranteed Winners in every store! Thanks for your Custom.

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**[www.farmandhomestore.ie](http://www.farmandhomestore.ie)**